Chapter III. Population.

Villages.

There is no marked difference between a Kánarese hamlet and a Kánarese village. As the whole of the district has not been surveyed the returns are uncertain. Some villages include several hamlets widely apart, and in many cases the lands of different villages are mixed together. This confusion arises from the practice of including in a single private or temple estate plots of land held by one owner in several villages. Kárwár before the survey had only thirty-seven villages, under the survey it has sixty-one. Similarly in Kumta the number of villages has been raised from 164 to 260. Under the old system the units were *sthals* or holdings, *majras* or hâmlets of two or more holdings, *gráms* or villages of two or more hamlets, and *máganis* or groups of two or more villages. Under the new or survey system the revenue charge of a *shánbhog* or village accountant takes the place of the *mágani* or village group. Some garden villages are inhabited solely by Havigs and their dependents; most other villages have a mixed population.[1]

Houses.

According to the 1881 census, of 74,991 the total number of houses, 68,832 were occupied and 6159 unoccupied. The total gave an average of 19·17 houses to the square mile, and the 68,832 occupied houses an average of 6·12 inmates to each house. Kánara houses may be arranged under four classes. Houses of the first class are two-storied, with verandas and front yards, tiled roofs, laterite walls, and wooden ceilings, containing a hall, two or three sleeping rooms, a cook-room, a bath-room, and a cattle-shed. The floors of all are smeared with a wash of cowdung and polished by stones. The bath-room and the cattle-shed form a separate block which generally stands behind the main building. Houses of the second class are two-storied, with mud walls, laterite pillars, thatched roofs, and floors cowdunged and polished as in first class houses. Houses of the third class are smaller than first and second class houses. They are one-storied, with mud walls, laterite pillars, thatched roofs, and wooden ceilings. Houses of the fourth class are small one-storied huts or cottages, with mud wattled reed or cocoa-palm leaf walls and thatched roofs. The walls of houses of the first and second classes are plastered with cement and those of other houses with cowdung mixed with mud. In the smaller or third class houses the side verandas are used as cattle-sheds and bath-rooms. In the palm and spice garden country the house of the Havig owner stands in the middle and the labourers live in huts on the skirts of the garden. The furniture of most Kánara houses includes straw mats, wooden boxes, benches, stools, brass lamps, copper brass and bell-metal vessels, and, in the houses of the rich, silver dining and drinking plates and cups. Some Hindu families, who know English, use tables, chairs, and other articles of European furniture, and some Native Christians and Eurasians use English cookery, glassware, and cutlery.

Communities.

Except in Haliyál and Mundgod petty divisions which border on Belgaum and Dhárwár, there are no village communities proper. The village establishment is more complete in the villages above

[1] Mr. A. R. Macdonald, C.S.

than in those below the Sahyádris. A complete village community contains a *purohit* or family priest, a *joishi* or astrologer, an *archak* or temple servant, *muktesars* or temple council, a *pánchál* or goldsmith, a *badige* or carpenter, an *achári* or blacksmith, a *kelasi* or barber, a *madival* or washerman, a *shimpi* or tailor, a *kumbár* or potter, and a *chamgár* or shoemaker; and of village officers the *gauda* or village headman, the *shánbhog* or village accountant, and the *ugrani* or village messenger. Besides these the *patanashitti* or shopkeeper is found in large trading villages. Not more than twenty-five per cent of the villages have the full establishment of officers and servants. Of the Government officers, as a rule, the headman or *pátil* is found alone in each village, and the accountant or *shánbhog* and the messenger or *ugrani* in each *mágni* or village group. The headman in Kánara villages is not an hereditary but a Government stipendiary officer chosen for his position and wealth. Formerly most headmen belonged to the lower orders of husbandmen, Nádors, Gondas, Halepáiks, Komárpáiks, Karivakkals, Sherugárs, or Maráthás. Of late in several cases the office has been given to Havigs, Shenvis, Sárasvats, Habbus, Chitpávans, Lingáyats, Jains, and Mulevars. The *kulkarni* or village accountant as a rule is a Bráhman. The *ugráni* or messenger is either a Halepaik, Komárpaik, Devli, or Musalmán.

Though he is not so powerful as in districts where the office is hereditary, the Kánara village headman takes a leading part in village affairs. So great is his importance as the leader of village ceremonies and festivals, that few are held unless the headman or some member of his family is present. He is the first to receive the betelnut and leaves at social gatherings, and the offerings and flower garlands at religious gatherings. Under the Madras Government till 1862, in addition to his revenue and police duties, the village headman was the head of the village council or *panchávat* which decided petty civil disputes. Though he no longer has this judicial power, the headman is still often consulted and appointed mediator in disputes between neighbouring villages or between landlord and tenant. He also settles family quarrels between husband and wife, parent and child, brother and brother. On marriage and other great family festivals a whole village is seldom feasted. But a headman or rich landholder besides the caste people of his own and neighbouring villages often asks as many as 1000 or even 2000 of his tenants, field servants, and other poor neighbours. At birth, thread-girding, marriage, death, memorial, and forest feasts or *vanbhojan* a number of guests are generally fed.[1] As a rule caste and other neighbours are asked to marriages, caste people alone to deaths, and only a few friends and relations to birth, memorial, and other feasts.

[1] On forest feast days the village people carry the image of the village god in a palanquin to a river bank on the border of the village forest. At the river bank the people wash the god and their own bodies in the water and take a meal which is specially prepared on the spot. After sunset the procession returns with music and dancing girls walking in front. On these forest feast days the village is lighted at night and on their way back from the forest the procession passes through the chief streets of the village.

Chapter III. Population. Communities.

The villagers as a body are considered to have the right to use the village grazing and forest lands, the village paths and roads, the village cattle troughs, ponds, wells, and rivers, and the village temples. In some large villages the grazing ground is divided into plots, each plot being allotted to a fixed number of families; but no limit is set to the number of cattle which a man may send to the village grazing ground. Villagers are allowed either from their own or from neighbouring forests to take free of charge as much dead wood as they want for home use. All classes of villagers draw water from the village cattle troughs, ponds, wells, and rivers, except that in some cases the right to use the water of the village pond for tillage is confined to the owners of a few fields, and that Holayars, Hussalars, Mhárs, Mángs, and Chámbhárs, who are regarded as impure, are not allowed even to touch the village drinking well, and have a well set apart for their use. Besides being forbidden the use of the village well the degraded classes are not allowed to enter the village temple but they may present offerings through the temple priest. In carrying out works of common usefulness, such as building the village temple, digging the village well, or deepening the village pond, the villagers help according to their means and position, rarely by paying cash, generally by supplying either material or labour. In the case of works, which are useful only to a particular caste, the caste who benefits is alone expected to contribute.

Besides their own land villagers often till land in one or more neighbouring villages. New settlers are not required to pay any fee when they settle, though some secure the favour of the goddess of the new village by offering her presents. Except in large lowland villages, where the moneylender and grain-dealer is often either a Konkani, a Váni, or a Navaiyat Musalmán, and in upland villages, where he is a Dhárwár Lingáyat, the person who lends grain and money to the poorer villagers is generally a well-to-do local landlord.

The *purohit* or family priest and the *joishi* or astrologer are the religious guides of the Hindu villagers. The astrologer consults the almanac, tells the villagers what days are lucky for birth and marriage ceremonies and for beginning to sow and to reap. The family priest conducts the family ceremonies, births, thread-girdings, marriages, deaths, and memorial feasts. Among high class Hindus the family priest is a Bráhman or a Lingáyat, and among the lower classes either a Gauda, a Budivanta, or a Kolkar. Besides their family priest most Hindus have a spiritual Teacher or *guru*, who or his representative visits his followers from time to time, advises them, purifies and blesses them, and receives their worship. The family priest is paid both in grain and in cash, and the spiritual Teacher in cash. The religious leaders among the Musalmáns are the *khatib* or preacher, the *mulla* or priest, and the *káji* or judge. The preacher or *khatib*, who is found only in large villages, conducts the Friday prayers or *namáj*, and generally enjoys some rent-free land. The *káji*, who was formerly the judge, or in the *káji's* absence the *naib*, conducts marriage, and the priest or *mulla* conducts birth, death, sacrifice, and other religious ceremonies. On these

occasions the *káji* and *mulla* are paid in cash by the persons for whom the ceremonies are performed, and in large towns besides private fees they draw a Government allowance.

Carpenters, blacksmiths, and other village craftsmen are paid either in cash or in grain or both in cash and in grain. For ordinary work the village craftsman is engaged and for building a new house or other more difficult work a more skilful craftsman from a neighbouring town is sent for and paid in cash.

Movements.

Of the people of Kánara the trading and educated classes alone leave the district in search of employment. The traders of Kumta, Kárwár, and Sirsi either go or send agents to Bombay and Hubli. A few educated Hindus and Christians also find Government employment outside of the district, and some send their sons to be educated in Bombay. Within the district there is much movement of trade between the uplands and the coast and of labour between the coast and the uplands. Traders, who attend fairs or weekly markets, return to their homes within four days, and those who go to the larger markets are absent from a week to a month. The brisk demand for field labour in the upland parts of the district is chiefly supplied in Yellápur from Goa, Kárwár, Ankola, and Kumta, and in Sírsi and Siddápur from Honávar and Báindur, Kundápur, and Udapi in South Kánara. For a month or two during the hot season the demand for labour in road-making, pond-digging, and well-sinking also brings considerable numbers of workmen from Dhárwár and Belgaum. Most of the Goa labourers are Christians. They find work chiefly in Havigs' gardens where they dig, carry manure, and do other garden work. They rarely bring their families with them and do not settle in the district. They stop for the eight fair months (October to May) and return with the setting in of the south-west monsoon. The same workmen generally work for the same master year after year. During the rains they work at home either in their own fields or for hire on their neighbours' land. A few carpenters and other skilled artisans from Kumta and Honávar find employment during the eight fair months in Sirsi, Siddápur, and other upland towns, and return home during the rains. The local labourers move from place to place, selling fuel and grass, and digging and making bricks. They are never away from their homes more than fifteen days at a time. The Yellápur saw-mills give employment to a few hands, but the people find the climate so unhealthy that few except Sidis remain there for any time. In December, January, and February a few workmen go from village to village tilling *suggi* or dry crop rice land, and return after a month or two when the work is over. Formerly some Kunbis and families belonging to the forest and hill tribes used to move about the district carrying on the wasteful system of wood-ash tillage in different parts of the forest. Since the area available for wood-ash tillage has been restricted, these wandering husbandmen have settled chiefly as labourers.